



Parking Advisory Committee

Date: September 29, 2021

Time: 2:00 PM – 3:00 PM

Location: Conducted via Remote Participation

Minutes

In Attendance: Ali Carter, Daniel Amstutz, Adam Chapdelaine, Leland Stein, Phyllis Marshall, Mike Rademacher, Melissa Laube, Corey Rateau, Julia Mirak, John Hurd.

1. Greetings and introductions, ground rules for online meetings.

Daniel Amstutz explained that the Committee was holding a virtual meeting as allowed by state law to continue to mitigate the spread of the COVID-19 virus. Governor Baker had signed an Executive Order in response to the COVID-19 pandemic allowing virtual meetings, which suspended the usual Open Meeting Law requirement that a quorum of committee members be physically present in order to hold an official committee meeting. The provisions of this Executive Order have been extended by the Legislature. Amstutz confirmed the committee members in attendance for the meeting.

Amstutz noted that Melissa Laube is taking over for Howard Muise as the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) representative to the committee. Laube noted she has been on the TAC since 2014, lives in Arlington in Precinct 13, and is a retired transportation planner who worked in consulting, on projects like parking management and the Big Dig.

2. Approval of the minutes for the February 17, 2021 and March 29, 2021 meetings.

Both sets of meeting minutes were approved.

3. Broadway Plaza Construction Update.

Adam Chapdelaine explained that Verizon had to excavate part of Broadway Plaza to move a duct bank that was on top of the Massachusetts Water Resource Authority (MWRA) infrastructure that the MWRA will be replacing starting later in the fall. It appears that the

Verizon work is mostly complete and soon the MWRA will begin their work to replace their pipe valve and test it over the winter. If all goes well with the project and weather permits, they will begin restoration of the plaza in late April and have it restored by the summer. Mike Rademacher noted Verizon is done with the construction of their new conduit and is now splicing the line from the old conduit to the new conduit. The MWRA should take over in mid to late October.

Julia Mirak asked for clarification about the end date for all the work to be completed. Rademacher noted that the MWRA's schedule is to have all the work completed, including the new plaza, by June 2022. Mirak asked if there was more disruption expected this fall. Rademacher explained that the disrupted area will be larger and the existing sidewalk café seating will need to move to the nearby parklet on Broadway.

4. Treasurer's Office updates: parking meter revenues and Parking Benefits District (PBD) financial information.

Phyllis Marshall notes she had updated the revenue for fiscal year 2021, which was still less than expected. Expenses are about \$107,000 which is about 52% of the expected budget. Some of the payments and expenses for parking enforcement and administration are distributed to the general fund at the beginning of the fiscal year. She went over some other expenses and noted they have had to spend a fair amount of money on parts. Credit card payments are down, but payments through the PaybyPhone app are up. Parking meter maintenance is paid monthly, as well as the lease payments to the church for the parking spots by the library. The lease payments for the parking meters will be completed shortly. Some funds will need to be set aside for meter parts and other maintenance. Single space meters also need to be upgraded to 4G networks to be compatible. They are still talking with IPS about the meter upgrades and

Mirak asked about the \$20,000 in the PBD budget. Marshall explained this funding is for the plantings in Arlington Center that this committee voted on earlier this year. Chapdelaine noted this funding covers four season's worth of plantings. Mirak asked if the spreadsheet could be updated with what Marshall discussed. Marshall noted the spreadsheet sent around was missing some information and she will send an updated spreadsheet around to the group. Chapdelaine asked if the information about the first few months of revenue collection for FY2022 could be included as well. Marshall noted that the revenues so far are \$38,848 for single-space meters, \$16,891 for multi-space meters, the charging stations brought in \$1,293 and PaybyPhone revenue is \$14,335. There is also about \$1,000 earned in interest. Chapdelaine estimated that they may bring in a little over \$400,000 in revenue this year, which is better than 2020 but not as much as previously. He also noted there is a fund

balance from previous years that they would like to protect. Marshall said that the fund balance is \$545,191 at this time.

Ali Carter shared that recently there was a walkthrough of Arlington Center and the Plaza with Town staff and concerned stakeholders, and a lot of concerns were brought up about the multi-space meters. Staff frequently hears complaints, and another solution may be needed as opposed to continuing to repair them. Marshall explained that the multi-space meters have had upgrade issues and the summer humidity was tough on them. However, they should be working well now. Corey Rateau noted he is trying to work with the parking enforcement officers to allow them to use discretion when writing tickets when the meters are not working properly. Mirak asked if other communities have had similar problems. Marshall said she has been working with IPS for a while and continues to have issues working with them. They also had issues with the meter maintenance company earlier in the year. Rateau noted that getting parts for electronics has been challenging during the pandemic. Amstutz asked about the change from Republic Parking to Reef. Marshall explained that Reef bought out Republic and there were some issues during this changeover, but she is still working with the same people locally. She talked about some other challenges that they have been working through over the last few months. Mirak asked if staff is looking for other vendors after the lease with IPS is up. Marshall said she will reach out to MAPC to discuss this as they have some new vendors coming online as part of their collective purchasing program. Carter offered to assist if there is anything that she can do to help.

5. PaybyPhone/mobile parking payment update.

Amstutz shared reports from PaybyPhone on the usage of their app for mobile parking payment. The data was pulled out on September 27. The number of transactions and usage of PaybyPhone has been increasingly steadily over the last several months. There have been almost 35,000 total transactions processed; about 12,400 unique users of PaybyPhone in Arlington; and \$62,500 in parking revenue has been generated (not accounting for the per transaction fee). Total revenue is now about \$9,000 per month. There are about 5,000 transactions taking place each month. This is a significant increase from earlier in the year when the program was still new. Some of the information is the same as before, with highest activity taking place right at 8 am and leveling off in the middle of the day before dropping by the end of the day when parking collections cease. Wednesdays and Thursdays tend to have the most activity of parking activity. Marshall said it is likely that people are using their credit cards through PaybyPhone instead of through the meters, which is why credit card meter payments are down. Amstutz asked if Marshall or Rateau had any feedback about the program. Rateau said things are generally going smoothly; issues seem to be about people

putting in the wrong information on PaybyPhone, or not going through the entire application, and getting a ticket as a result of that. Marshall said other types of user error seem to be occurring like using a wrong digit or the wrong zone. In general however people are using it and seem to be liking it.

6. Committee Member Changes.

Amstutz said that, as noted in the beginning, Melissa Laube is the new TAC representative on the committee. Darcy Devney used to come to PAC as a representative of the Disability Commission, but she has stepped down from that role. He has reached out to Jill Harvey in the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion office (DEI) to see about getting a new person designated by the Commission. Finally, he noted that Linda Butt had represented Arlington Catholic on the PAC for a while but had stepped down last year. Steve Barrett at Arlington Catholic had agreed to be the new representative but he did not attend any meetings and recently informed Amstutz that he cannot participate at this time. He said there are other committee members they could search for as part of the reorganization of the charter a couple years ago; although that was more intended to happen when they start working on other commercial areas in Arlington.

7. Select Board referral: Swan Place Parking.

Amstutz shared a referral from the Select Board related to parking on Swan Place. The question in the referral is related to the Arlington Center Parking Study. Swan Place was originally two-hour parking and was standardized as four-hour free parking as part of that study's implementation. Parking counts and turnover were not conducted on Swan Place during the study. Rateau explained that there was an experiment to do resident parking on the street that was supposed to end after a set period of time, but simply continued on over the years where parking permits were issued to the residences. Eventually this was re-looked at with the study, and they began looking at issuing overnight parking permits based on the off-street parking availability of the individual properties. Each property is given a certain number of permits and they pass on to the next people after that – this has basically been grandfathered in. John Hurd noted that for this particular property, they had a challenging hearing with the Select Board as they wanted more parking permits than the Board was willing to provide. Carter said the Arlington Center Parking Study is still valid and the recently developed Sustainable Transportation Plan indicates that parking all day in business districts is not a goal of the transportation system. Rateau said it is difficult to justify providing more permits for this street given that they benefited from an error for many years.

8. Set next committee meeting date and time.

Meeting members agreed to hold the next meeting on October 27 at 1 pm.

9. Any other business.

None was shared.

10. Adjourn.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:03 PM.